

READING FRENCH-CANADIAN MARRIAGE RECORDS

Canada “How to” Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

August 2016

GOAL

This guide will teach you how to extract genealogical information from a French-Canadian marriage record by identifying key words and phrases.

INTRODUCTION

Most church parishes recorded marriages before civil governments did. Catholic parish registers are excellent records and are key sources for genealogists. Marriage records usually contain the following information:

- Date of marriage
- Name of groom
- Names of groom's parents and their residence
- Name of bride
- Names of bride's parents and their residence
- Whether parents are living or deceased

The place of marriage may not be written in the marriage itself, but can be found at the beginning of the record or the book.

Many French-Canadian records are available online at FamilySearch. The following links will take you to these collections:

Quebec, Catholic Parish Registers, 1621-1979 (some indexes and images)

<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1321742>

You may want to consult the following “How to” Guides before continuing:

- [Inserting Special Characters](#)

HOW TO

To begin your search in the marriage records, it helps if you know the following information:

- Name of bride or groom
- Approximate year and place of marriage

Key Vocabulary Words:

French	English
de cette paroisse	of this parish
filles majeures	adult daughter; daughter of age

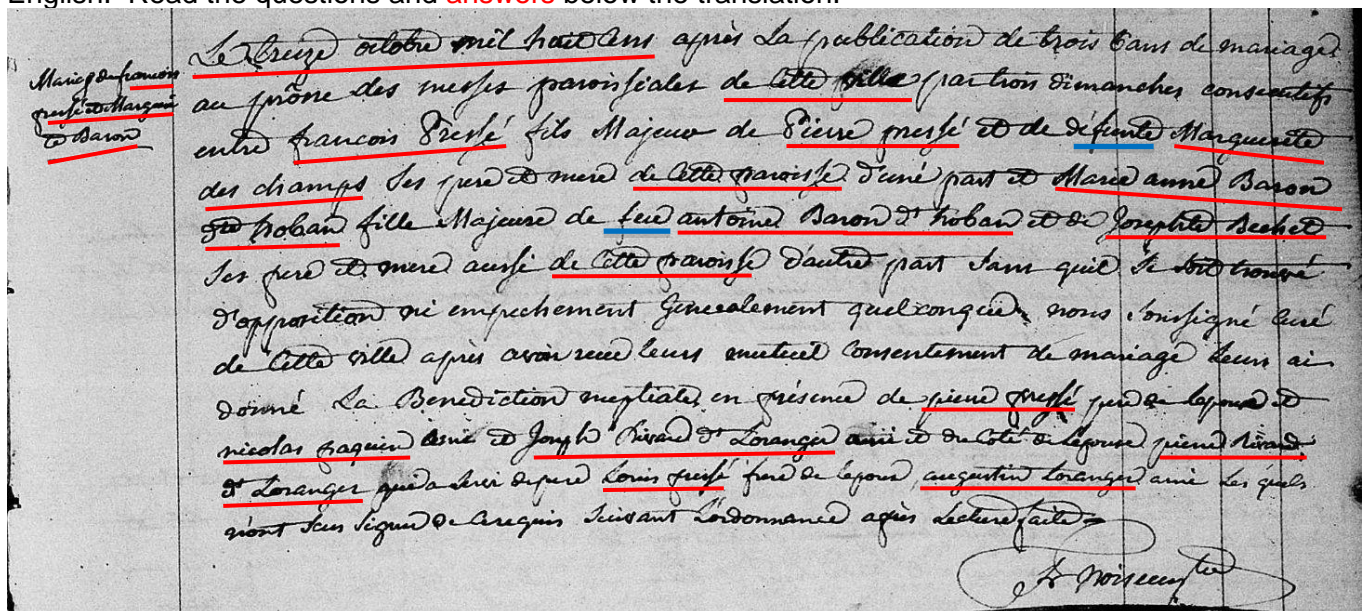
filles mineures	minor daughter
fils majeur	adult son; son of age
fils mineur	minor son
un empêchement	an impediment
aucun empêchement	no impediment
la bénédiction nuptiale	the nuptial blessing
défunt (or) feu (masculine)	deceased (for a male)
défunte (or) feue (feminine)	deceased (for a female)
époux / épouse	husband (groom) / wife (bride)

Format

In French-Canadian records, the date is usually spelled out. Thus, 10 January 1817 would appear in French as *le dix janvier mil huit cent dix sept*. For a word list containing dates, among other French words, see https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/French_Genealogical_Word_List.

Marriage records usually follow a similar format. The following is an example of a typical marriage record.

Sample Marriage Record. Following the image, the entry is written out in French, and then English. Read the questions and **answers** below the translation.



Source: <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JDRF-N9P>

French transcription of Marriage Record, line by line

Mariage of François Pressé et Marguerite Baron

Le treize octobre mil huit cent après la publication de trois bans de mariage au prône des messes paroissiales de cette ville par trois dimanches consécutifs entre François Pressé fils majeur de Pierre Pressé et de défunte Marguerite des Champs les père et mère de cette paroisse d'une part et Marie Anne Baron dite Hobard fille majeure de feu Antoine Baron dit Hobard et de Josephite Bech et les père et mère aussi de cette paroisse d'autre part sans qu'il se soit trouvé

d'opposition ni empêchement généralement quelconque, nous soussigné curé de cette ville après avoir reçu leurs mutuels consentements de mariage, leur ai donné la benediction nuptiale en présence de Pierre Pressé pere de l'epoux et Nicolas Paquin ami et Joseph Rivard dit Loranger ami et du coté du l'epouse Pierre Rivard dit Loranger qui a servi de pere Louis Pressé frere de l'epoux, et Augustin Loranger, ami lesquels n'ont su signer et ce requis suivant l'ordonnance après lecture faite.

Fr. Noiseaur, Ptr

English translation of Marriage Record, line by line.

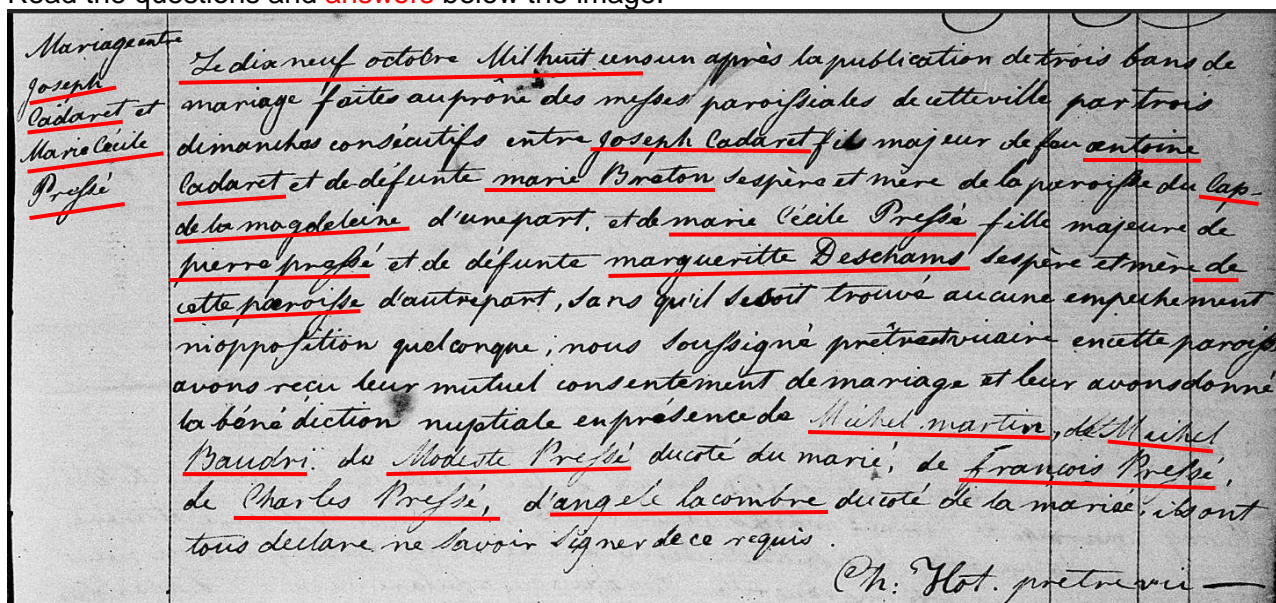
Marriage of François Pressé and Marguerite Baron

The 13 October 1800, after the publication of three bans of marriage in front of the parish mass of this village on three Sundays consecutively between François Pressé, adult son of Pierre Pressé and the deceased Marguerite des Champs, his parents of this parish of one part, and Marie Anne Baron dite Hobard, major daughter of deceased Antoine Baron dit Hobard and of Josephthe Bech and her parents also of this parish, of the other part. Having found no opposition nor impediment generally whatever, we the undersigned curator of this village after having received their mutual consent of marriage, to them give the blessing of marriage in presence of Pierre Pressé, father of the groom and Nicolas Paquin friend and Joseph Rivard dit Lorranger friend on the side of the bride, Pierre Rivard dit Loranger who served as father, Louis Pressé, brother of the groom, Augustin Loranger, friend which do not know how to sign as is required by the law after the service was given.

Fr. Noiseaur, Priest

1. **Who is getting married?** Look at image margin and lines 3 and 4 of the image – François Pressé and Marie Anne Baron dit Hobard
2. **What is the date of marriage?** Look in line 1 of the image – Le treize octobre mil huit cent (13 October 1800)
3. **What is the name of the place they are getting married?** Immaculée Conception, Trois-Rivières, Quebec, Canada. The parish name is not in the paragraph, but is found at the beginning of the original record book and in the indexed record. To find it, click on the source link below the image of the marriage record.
4. **Who is the groom's father?** Look in line 3 of the image – Pierre Pressé
5. **Who is the groom's deceased mother?** Look in lines 3 and 4 of the image – défunte (deceased) Marguerite des Champs
6. **Who is the bride's deceased father?** Look in line 5 of the image – feu (deceased) Antoine Baron dit Hobard
7. **Who is the bride's mother?** Look in line 5 of the image – Josephthe Bech
8. **Who are the witnesses?** Look in Lines 10 and 11 in the image – Nicolas Paquin (friend), Joseph Rivard dit Loranger (friend of the bride) Pierre Rivard dit Loranger (who served as father of the bride), Louis Pressé, (brother of the groom), Augustin Loranger, (friend).

Marriage Record. Now, try to identify the key words and phrases without a full translation. Read the questions and **answers** below the image.



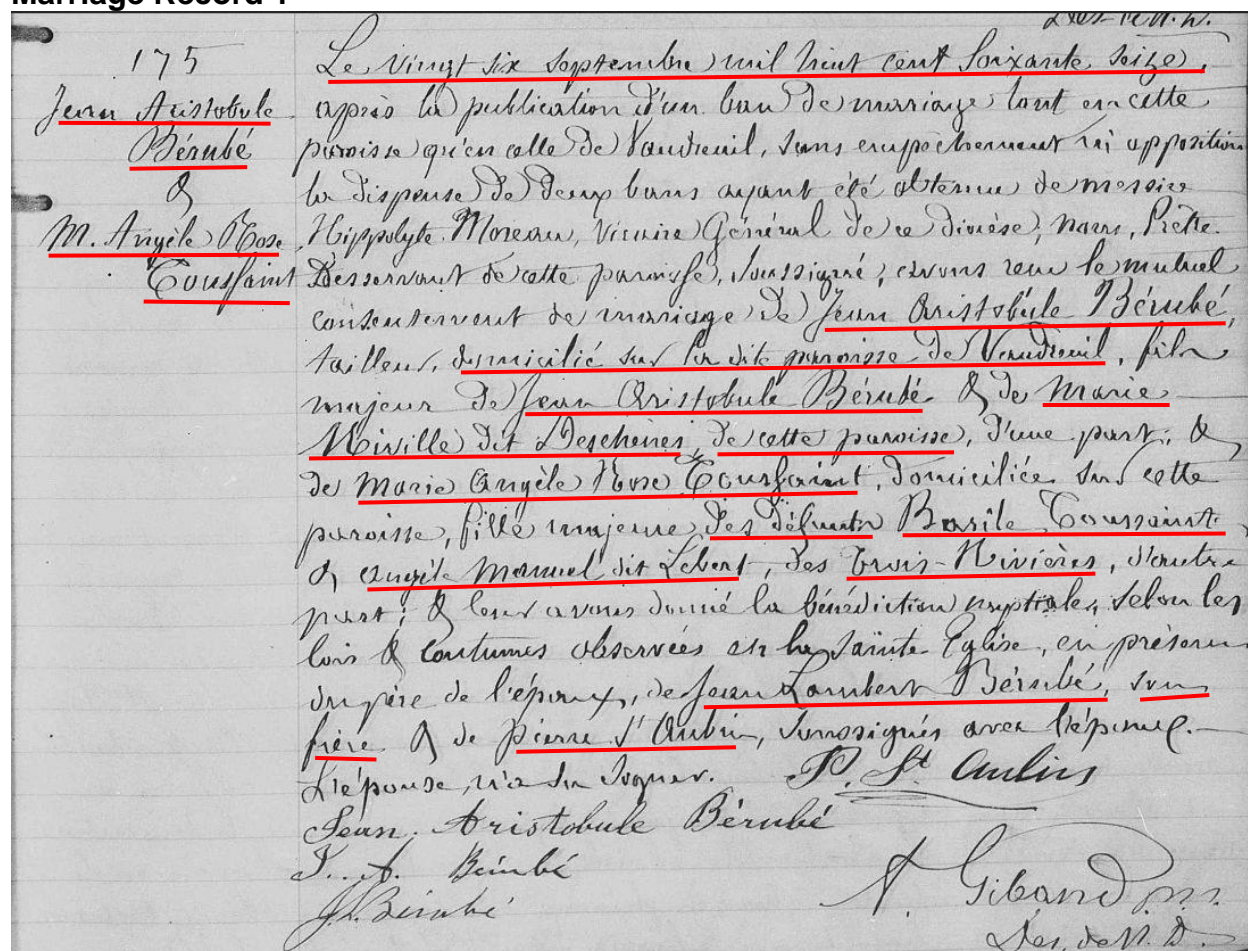
Source: <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JDRF-GHC>

1. **Who was married?** Look in the margin and lines 3 and 5 – **Joseph Cadaret et Marie Cécile Pressé**
2. **What was marriage date?** Look in line 1 – **Le dix neuf Octobre mil huit cent un** (19 October 1801)
3. **Who were the groom's parents?** Look in lines 3 and 4 – **feu Antoine Cadaret et de défunte Marie Breton les père et mère** (deceased Antoine Cadaret and of deceased Marie Breton the father and mother)
4. **Where were the groom's parents from?** Look in lines 4 and 5 – **du Cap de la Magdeleine**
5. **Who were the bride's parents?** Look in line 6 – **Pierre Pressé et de défunte Marguerite Deschamps les père et mère** (Pierre Pressé and of deceased Marguerite Deschamps the father and mother)
6. **Where were the bride's parents from?** Look in lines 6 and 7 – **de cette paroisse** (of this parish). The parish name is not in the paragraph, but is found at the beginning of the original record book and in the indexed record: Immaculée Conception, Trois-Rivières, Québec, Canada. To find it, click on the source link below the image.
7. **Who were the witnesses?** Look in lines 10-12 – **Michel Martin, Michel Baudri, Modeste Pressé, François Pressé, Charles Pressé, Angèle la Combre**

PRACTICE

Look at the following two marriage records. Read the questions and look for the answers in the images.

Marriage Record 1

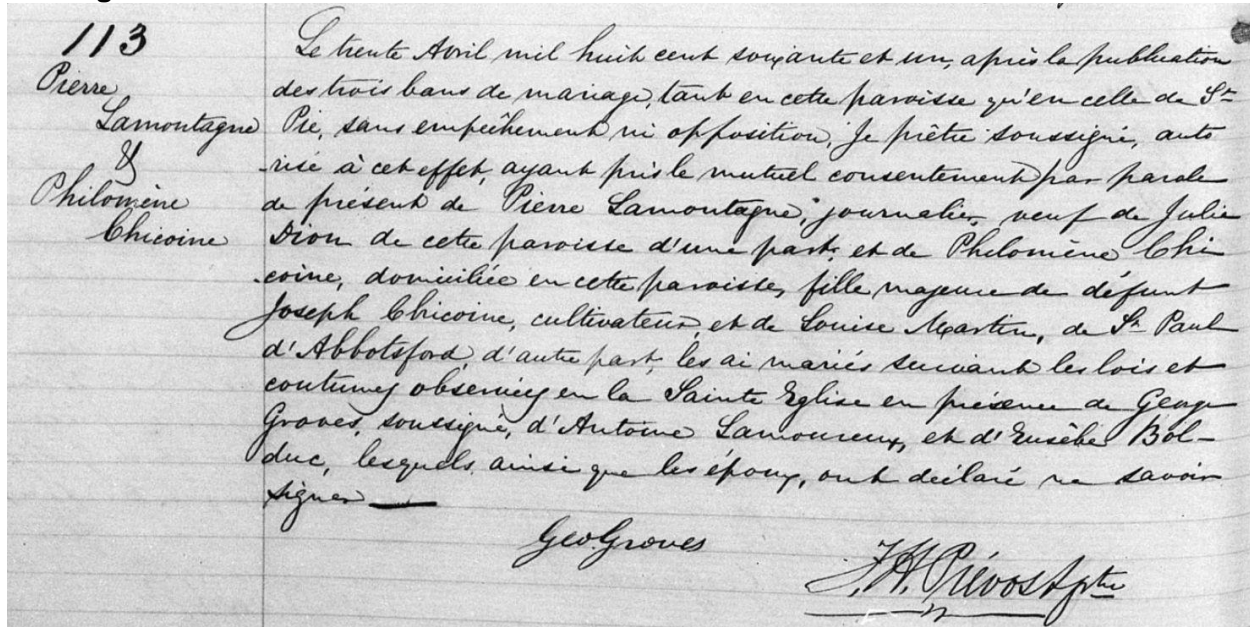


Source: <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JDT2-23L>

1. **Who was married?** Look in the margin and lines 7 and 11 – **Jean Aristobule Bérubé** and **Marie Angèle Rose Toussaint**
2. **What was the date of the marriage?** Look in line 1 – **Le vingt-six septembre mil huit cent soixante seize** (26 September 1876)
3. **What were the names of the groom's father and mother?** Look in lines 9 and 10 – **Jean Aristobule Bérubé** and **Marie Miville dit Deschênes**
4. **What were the names of the bride's father and mother?** Look in lines 12 and 13 – **Basile Toussaint** and **Angèle Manuel dit Lebert**
5. **Are the bride's parents living?** Look in line 12 – **No, des défunts** (the departed plural)
6. **Where were both families from?** Look in lines 10 and 13 – **cette paroisse** (this parish). The location is not found in the paragraph but is found in the indexed record: Trois-Rivières, Trois-Rivières, Québec, Canada. To find it, click on the source link below the image.
7. **Who were the witnesses?** Look in lines 16 and 17 – **Jean Lambert Bérubé, son frère,**

(his [the groom's] brother), **Pierre St. Aubin**

Marriage Record 2



Source: <https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:JDTF-LDN>

1. **Who was married?** Look in the image margin and lines 5-7 – **Pierre Lamontagne** and **Philomène Chicoine**
2. **What was the date of the marriage?** Look in line 1 – **Le trente avril mil huit cent soixante et un** (30 April 1861)
3. **What was the groom's first wife's name?** Look in lines 5 and 6 – **veuf de** (widower of) **Julie Dion**
4. **What were the names of the bride's father and mother?** Look in line 8 – **Joseph Chicoine** and **Louise Martin**
5. **Where were the bride's parents from?** Look in lines 8 and 9 – **St Paul d'Abbotsford**
6. **Is the bride's father living?** Look in line 7 – **défunt** (deceased) **Joseph Chicoine**
7. **Where did the marriage take place?** Look in line 3 – Banns at **St-Pie**. The marriage took place at Nôtre-Dame, Montréal, Québec, Canada; this name is found in the indexed record. To find it, click on the source link below the image.
8. **Who were the witnesses?** Look in lines 10-12 – **George Groves**, **Atoine Lamoureux**, **Eusèbe Bolduc**

ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this "How to" Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you've mastered the guide! [Click here](#) to try out the Activity.